

LETTERS

More golf? It's on everyone's mind

North Hill expansion won't hurt town water supply

To the editor:

In order to better understand aquifer protection, one needs to be familiar with the definition of an "aquifer." Horsley & Whitten, Inc., Environmental Services defines "aquifer" as follows: "Ground water is water which saturates pore spaces between gravel, sand, silt or clay particles, or in bedrock fractures, in the subsurface environment. The geologic formations which hold ground water, and from which significant quantities of ground water can be extracted, are called aquifers. Ground water is derived primarily from precipitation which percolates downward and recharges the aquifer. Depending upon local conditions, approximately one quarter to one half of the precipitation results in ground water recharge. The remainder is lost to evaporation and transpiration by plants or to surface runoff."

Applying this to the town of Duxbury, the primary recharge area of Type II Zone of Contribution, extends from Lake Shore Drive, in the west, to Partridge Road, in the east, and from the area of Temple and Franklin streets, in the north to Mayflower Street, in the south. This area comprises approximately 10 square miles, or a little over 1/3 of our town. The North Hill expansion will cover 95-plus acres, which translates to 1.5 percent of the defined aquifer.

Chemicals and pesticides that are applied to any golf course must be done by a licensed agronomist. The agronomist must submit to the Commonwealth an annual report that includes a log of what chemicals and pesticides have been applied, when and in what concentrations. These products have to be sanctioned by the Environmental Protection Agency.

The North Hill expansion committee undertook a comprehensive review of Bayberry Hills Golf Course in Yarmouth.

The course lies within the Aquifer Protection Overlay District of Yarmouth, and it abuts and lies up gradient of town well fields. The course was built in 1990. To ensure that the ground water resources under the golf course continued to meet drinking water standards, now and in the future, they implemented a ground water management program which regulates the use of all chemicals and pesticides on the course. Approval of this program was signed by all town boards, including water quality, board of health, board of selectmen, water department superintendent, town administrator, director of DPW, superintendent of golf courses and the chairman of the golf commission. The ground water has been continually monitored over the past five years by monitoring wells. This past December they voted to reduce quarterly testing of these wells to once a year due to the absence of any significant contaminants. The committee could not uncover any instance where a golf course has contaminated a public water supply.

The key to a successful program of protection of the aquifer is control. The town owns the golf course and it is the town that will deem what is to be used on the course. In our proposal one of the tasks to be undertaken by Horsley & Whitten is the preparation of a ground water monitoring program as well as an integrated pest management program. These are our safeguards.

The nearest town wells to the golf course are the Tremont Street wells, which are surrounded by single family residences. The town has no control over application of chemicals or pesticides on private property. How many homes are located on the remaining 6,305 acres covering the aquifer?

Jerry Dewing
chairman, expansion committee
Duxbury

It won't bring in much more money

To the editor:

In the Feb. 22 *Reporter* a letter from the ad hoc North Hill expansion committee outlined some of the history of town meeting votes about the acquisition and proposed uses of the 300-plus acres known as the North Hill property. That letter incorrectly stated that the annual town meeting of 1994 "postponed indefinitely the expansion project," while actually the vote was to deny the selectmen's request for authority to appropriate funds for expansion of the golf course.

Of course, past votes are ancient history now. The question today is whether it is in the best interests of the town to authorize expenditures of \$1.5 million or more to expand the nine hole municipal golf course to 18 holes.

Many people seem to think that would be a financial bonanza significantly reducing our taxes. There is plenty of evidence to question that assumption.

The RKG economic feasibility study of April 1993 mentioned in the ad hoc committee's Feb. 15 letter clearly stated that the maximum income to the town would be realized if the town operated the course itself rather than lease the operation to a management company as it now does. The new five-year lease to the Gunnarsons (now required to be rebid) would give the town an average annual income of \$101,000, culminating in a payment of \$125,000 in 1999. Another management com-

pany has challenged this bid, suggesting that a higher offer is likely. And if the town were to operate the course, the logical result would be even more income for the town.

By comparison, according to the chairman of the Brewster Golf Commission the Brewster 18-hole municipal course (described in the *Boston Globe* of Jan. 3 as nationally acclaimed) has averaged \$130,000 to the town but return only \$80,000 in 1994. This course is operated by the town. If leased out to a management company, the net to the town would logically be less.

Also, the two 18-hole municipal courses in Dennis, operated by the town, have netted the town about \$200,000 in 1993, and nearly \$300,000 in 1994, or an average of \$125,000 per course.

It would appear that Duxbury could just about duplicate these figures by operating the present nine-hole course, without spending millions and bulldozing 80 to 90 acres of our central greenbelt woodlands. And assuming that Duxbury could do better with an 18-hole course than these well-established ones is pure speculation.

John Joline
Duxbury

Editor's note: for the record, the 1994 annual town meeting warrant had two articles dealing with North Hill Golf Course expansion. The first was indefinitely postponed. The second, calling for a study of expansion, did not pass.